Regardless of intention, the Alexander Hamilton Forum's event presents gender-affirming care as something debatable which is, to say the very least, insensitive, distasteful, and harmful especially in the current political climate of the United States. By creating a forum which places each side as having equal footing, this provides a window for students on our campus to validate hateful ideology that is based on misinformation- something that seems extremely inappropriate for a school sanctioned event. It also sends very confusing and inaccurate messages about gender-affirming care into our campus that takes the focus away from the anti-trans legislation this country is seeing introduced at a new and grossly high rate, while simultaneously reframing access to healthcare as something that is 'debatable' and not something that Middlebury promises its students access to (Middlebury). Reinforcing biases through the dissemination of false information is far from 'open-minded' and should not be something the Hamilton Forum is "excited" to participate in. Now to get into the individual speakers…

Who is Leor Sapir?

Sapir is a political journalist who is committed to creating and spreading pseudoscience in order to push his conservative anti-trans agenda and spread senseless and uninformed propaganda. Sapir holds absolutely zero credentials in the realm of gender studies or the medical field- making him even less qualified to be a panelist in this Forum. Sapir has demonstrated numerous examples of his biases using his articles published, interviews, and his Twitter/X to spread violent misinformation on gender while simultaneously revealing his personal racist ideology and devaluing of different marginalized groups (City Journal) (City Journal). Sapir has continuously attempted to downplay the credentials and scientific studies published by legitimate and well-respected medical institutions such as the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (TransgenderMap). As the 2022 President of the AAP stated years ago, "There is strong consensus among the most prominent medical organizations worldwide that evidence-based, gender-affirming care for transgender children and adolescents is medically necessary and appropriate. It can even be lifesaving. The decision of whether and when to start gender-affirming treatment, which does not necessarily lead to hormone therapy or surgery, is personal and involves careful consideration by each patient and their family" (American Academy of Pediatrics). Sapir works tirelessly to reverse major advancements that have been made medically, socially, and scientifically in regards to understanding gender-diversity and the importance of gender-affirming care. This is yet another reason why allowing speakers like Sapir to have a platform on our campus, is dangerous and a concerning indicator of the lack of research done when choosing speakers at these Forums. Spreading misinformation and pseudoscience from the position of an "expert" is a harmful choice that rings many bells of concern towards the true intention of events hosted by the Alexander Hamilton Forum.

Who is Brianna Wu?

Wu is a trans woman and a controversial figure in the trans community, viewed by parts of the trans and queer communities as a political opportunist and grifter. She has a background as an online gaming streamer and video game developer, and made an unsuccessful bid for a Massachusetts congressional seat in 2018. She has been criticised by a number of high-profile people within the trans community, including civil rights lawyer Alejandra Caraballo, who accused her of wanting to "police the entire community" (Pink News). Wu espouses her views on the trans community, trans healthcare, and politics primarily through X/Twitter, where she has said the trans community has become an "extremist movement" (Pink News). She has a history of speaking against right-wing attempts to ban gender-affirming healthcare, but at the same time has attacked and mocked trans people, their pronouns, appearances, rights, and access to medical care (Times Now News). Wu has fallen rhetorically in step with the fear mongering of the right in her attacks on gender identity education and access to gender affirming care, echoing notions that children are being indoctrinated and that medical professionals prescribing care fail to distinguish between individuals who are "actually" trans and those who are not (X). After a trans toilet ban was mandated in the lower house of congress this past fall, Wu said: "Trans women on a medical pathway, diagnosed by a professional, on powerful drugs that inhibit erections? We are a threat to no one" (Pink News). However, she then railed against other trans people using women's toilets, and misgendered them: "Self-ID in the women's bathroom or locker room? Hell, no. Natal males who are part of the non-binary social project in there? Also, hell no" (Pink News). It is evident that Wu does not believe that gender-affirming care is for all people who need it; she only believes that people who meet her standards deserve gender-affirming care. Wu also does not provide appropriate considerations in regards to peoples access to healthcare, therapy, and resources required in order to medically transition, which leaves out marginalized communities, especially those with complicated relationships to healthcare professionals. Wu has demonstrated, through numerous tweets and answers during interviews, that she is unable to listen and amplify the voices of communities that are most impacted. Instead, she resorts to talking points that lack nuance and depend on gross generalizations and us v.s. them stereotypes that only contribute to racist thinking and dangerous views of marginalized communities.